



School of the Nations
University Guidance Counselling Handbook
2020-2021

University Guidance Department
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Introduction

This handbook is to help you navigate the journey of picking, applying and going to university. Please read it carefully and it will give you a good insight to what you need to make a successful application to universities anywhere in the world.

Going to university is an exciting and daunting time for students and parents, SON want to make sure that you are making the right decisions we are here to help you with every step. There is a lot to think about, “which country, what course, what size of university do I want to go to, will I fit in, how prestigious is it and what careers can I have after university?” There will be lots of questions you and your parents will have throughout this process.

To help you with the process the school uses UniFrog, this is an on-line tool that helps each student to work out what is the best fit university for them. This can be accessed from home, on the phone or at school. Lesson on this will be given to students and they are then able to use the system freely.

This handbook will cover popular countries that SON students have applied to in the past. In each country's section there will be information about the types of university education you will get and what that means, how to apply and required documents, the universities decision making process, costs and finally information about visa.

How to find the right university for you

Alongside this handbook there is a HE workbook that has practical activities for you to do to help you make realistic choices. This workbook works side by side with UniFrog. You need to use UniFrog to do your research. You will not find the right university for you if you do not do any research.

What to think about when choosing a university. WHAT SUBJECT DO YOU WANT TO STUDY

Country - Each university system is different for every country, some are similar, but look at what it can offer you, what kind of experience do you want to have. When thinking about the university think about if this is country where the degree holds a currency to employers.

How far away is the university are you happy to be going this far. What is the political situation of the country is this going to have an impact on your degree. Do you want to stay in this country after graduation or go somewhere else?

Type of degree offered - You will hear different types of degree the majority will go to do a bachelor's degree. Some degrees are 3 years and other can be up to 4 years depending on the country. Here are a different types of qualifications you can do a university.

Foundation degree – One year pre degree course. Usually taken by students who have not met the entry requirements for the degree program. Some medical programs offer this if students are missing a key science subject.

HND/HNC – designed to prepare you for a specific career they are more vocational and less academic and take up to two year. They can lead to degree program.

Certifications and Diplomas - Shorter than other degree programs, approximately 3 months.

Associate Degree – 2 years career focused you then can lead onto a bachelor degree.

Bachelor Degree – 3 to 4 years good for work or post-graduate study, you will do a degree in a subject area, Arts, Science, and Engineering etc.

Single honours programs involve focused study of a single subject. The core of each program is already designed and you have the opportunity to shape your work by choosing additional modules.

Joint honours programs/Combined programs enable you to study a combination of subjects, creating opportunities for you to build a degree program to suit your personal interests and needs.

Bachelor with Honours Sandwich courses: courses with one year in industry or a year abroad.
Associates Degree

A few degrees that are related to certain professions will take you straight into a masters.

Masters – usually 1 year but can be 2. It follows on from an undergraduate degree. They are taught in the classroom or are research based.

Look at how the degree programs are structure, degrees focused on subjects, you may take other subject modules but your main degree will be in a particular subject.

What to think about

Teaching V Research – Often not thought about when students are researching universities but has an impact on your learning experience. You know how you learn and what suits you.

A Research University is committed to research as a central part of its mission and much of the funding will come from companies supporting research. You are likely to be in a large lecture hall and it is more impersonal, your Professor may not know your name. You may also get taught by Post Grad students who are doing research. Research universities tend to have multiple colleges on the main campus, Research universities tend to offer a wider selection of degree programs and are highly academic.

Teaching universities, known as Liberal art universities in North America tend to have multidisciplinary degree programs. There are smaller class size and you will know your professors. Lessons are more likely to be diverse, with seminars, discussions and more peer activities.

You need to think about what is important to you and how you learn, such as the program options, research exposure, class size etc. Do they give you academic freedom to pursue your career goals?

University Campus – Universities are not all the same. Some are in cities and you have to navigate the city to find your lecture building and your halls (where you sleep) are in and amongst a city or town. Then there are universities where everything is on Campus, the university is like its own village, where there are shops, and café sometimes a cinema, gym and not forgetting the libraries.

The sizes of universities vary, some only have a few thousands students that creates an intimate feel where there is great comradery and faculty staff will know who you are. Bigger universities offer many more clubs and societies and many more post-graduate students. The best way to know what you want is to visit and see how it feels.

Research being done at university – Each university and many departments will be doing key research and this maybe an area that you are interested in, there may be a lecturer who is researching an area that you wish to learn more about. You may be taught by those who are leading the development in key areas.

Modules taught - Are they relevant to what you want to learn are they going to help develop you into career that you want to do? How are you being taught, it is all classroom based, or lectures in a lecture hall with hundreds of students. Are any of the modules on-line? You need to know how you learn and what is the best ways for you to be taught. Do you seminars. Each university and depending on what you learning may be different to how it is taught. In IB you need to be identify what kind of classes you work best in.

University Fees – These vary from country to Country and also the type of university you go too. Private universities in the USA are the most expensive. Your home country maybe the cheapest option. Some universities will ask you for a deposit to secure your place. This can get expensive and this varies on university. Usually being an International Student universities like you to pay on deposit to make you commit. The deposit is usually given back if your results do not meet the entry conditions on results day. If you change your mind and do not go the university will keep it. Average Deposit – 10,000 HKD to 20,000 HKD.

Graduate opportunities – The point of going to university is to give you the knowledge and skills to get the career that you want. How do they support their graduates, is there a careers service and do they offer opportunities for you to find internships, lessons on how to set up your own business, what employers come to their university to recruit the graduates.

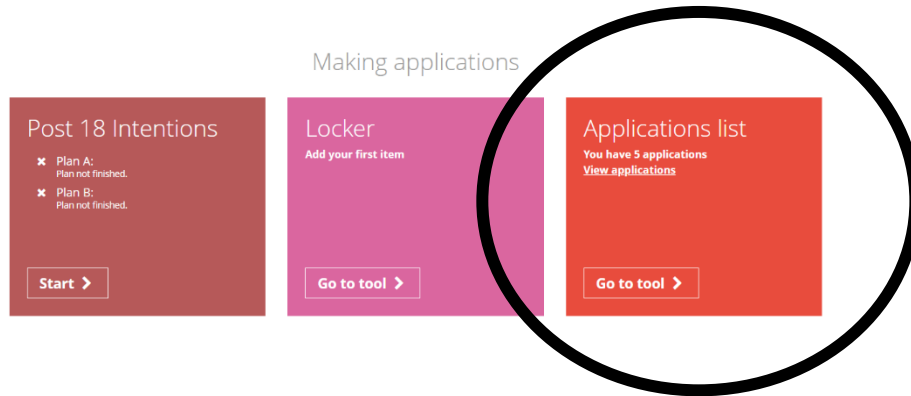
What do current students say about the university? – One big indicator of how good university is, is what current students say and the graduates. This can give you an idea of what it is going to be like. They can tell you how much pressure you will be under, are the lectures any good, is the library suitable for use. There are many websites that you can look at to see what people are saying and on social media. Go to open days or plan a trip in the holidays to inform yourself.

Ranking – Ranking is important but what is most important is the right university that suits your abilities, wants and learning style. Some schools will have higher rankings for certain subjects it is worth checking out your chosen area, the higher the ranking the more competitive it is to get into.

Prestige– Ivy League or the Russell Group are the top universities. They are hard to get into. They don't only want you to have the academic ability but they also want you to be exceptional in every area of your life and are highly competitive. If you apply and meet the entrance requirements for a university that is in the world ranking top 10 there is a 5% chance you will get an offer. You can also think about applying for grad school to one of these universities if you don't get in for undergrad. If Ivy League is what you want don't forget the Public Ivy League University. They compete with the Ivy League schools in academic rigor, at a lower cost and are more diverse. Also look at Honors college in Larger public College in the US this helps recognise and distinguish especially talented, motivated and determined students and are highly selective.

Your list

You need to have a final list by the end of October and this has to be handed to the guidance counsellor. The maximum number we advise is **ten**. If you pick strategically you will get offer and do not need to apply to more than ten. Please have this done on UniFrog and the guidance counsellor can then check and monitor your developments and what is needed.



	Student items: completion status	Country
Queen's University Smith School of Business IB: 35	No items associated yet; add them here	Canada
HKUST Rocket Science	No items associated yet; add them here	HK
UCL (University College London) Psychology 3FT BSc (Hons) A-Level: A*,A,A	No items associated yet; add them here	UK
University of Birmingham Psychology and Psychological Practice 4FT Msc (Hons) A-Level: A*,A,A	No items associated yet; add them here	UK
Johns Hopkins University Programme not entered yet SAT 25-75: 1410-1570	No items associated yet; add them here	USA

Your list needs to be a range. Universities you apply to need to be in your range. There are 3 scores you need to consider, safety score, realistic and aspirational. Don't apply to all aspirational universities you will leave yourself without any options

Safety Will meet entry requirements	Realistic Matches your grades	Aspirational you don't meet requirements but you might have a chance
IB Score 30	IB Score 32	IB Score 35

(Americans will say, Likely, Fit and Reach school)

Reference Letters and transcripts

Reference/Recommendation letters

Universities will require a reference or a recommendation letter, you will need to ask a teacher who knows you well to write this. To make sure that they know more about you, you need to ask them to fill in a reference/recommendation letter request form.

The teacher you ask should know you academically and your extracurricular activities. They need to write about what kind of student you are, how you have developed as a student, your suitability for your chosen subject.


Deadline for letter requests is **November 30th** unless you are applying to **Oxbridge Vet/Med** in the UK deadline is **Sept 30th**.

Do

- Ask your teacher giving 2 weeks' notice
- Fill in the reference/recommendation letter request form
- Ask the Guidance counsellor to sign the request form

Don't

- Leave it to the last minute
- Ask lots of teachers
- Ask a teacher and then change your mind

Teacher Recommendation Request Sheet							
School of the Nations Guidance Counseling Department							
Teacher's Name: <input type="text"/>							
Student's Name: <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have reviewed this recommendation request						
Student's e-mail address: <input type="text"/>	Guidance Counsellor's Signature <input type="text"/>						
<p>Students: The information on this form should only pertain to your performance in this teacher's class. Answer all questions completely by giving specific evidence while avoiding redundancy. The boxes will expand as you enter text. While this may feel tedious, fully answering questions will result in a more thoughtful and effective recommendation. Once you are finished, show this form to the guidance counselor who will sign in the box above. You will then give this form along with a copy of your essay and resume (if created) to your teacher and politely ask that a recommendation be written. You must give referees at least 2 weeks' notice for a letter to be written. Otherwise, a referee can refuse your request.</p> <p>Teacher: Thank you for agreeing to write this recommendation. Once you've finished your letter, please submit an electronic copy to Guidance Counseling Department. You will then get a chance to review/sign the letter before it is sent on the student's behalf if you are a UCAS referee, please upload the text directly to UCAS, but make sure you have all predicted grades before doing so. If you need any help, please contact Guidance Counseling Department.</p> <p>I plan to apply to the following colleges/universities: <input type="text"/></p> <table border="0"><tr><td>List the previous courses you have taken in this department and the semester average grades you earned:</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>(List course and grades)</td><td>(List course and grades)</td></tr><tr><td><input type="text"/></td><td><input type="text"/></td></tr></table> <p>What subject area or major do you think you will study in university? How certain are you? <input type="text"/></p> <p>Why have you asked this particular teacher to write a recommendation letter (flattery is not necessary; talk about what this teacher knows about you)? What do you hope this letter will show about you that your grades and test scores don't? <input type="text"/></p> <p>Your teacher's recommendation concentrates on your performance in this class. Describe your performance and contributions to <u>this teacher's class</u> and support it with particular incidences of your contribution. Avoid general statements – reference particular events, discussions, etc. <input type="text"/></p> <p>Related to your teacher's knowledge of you, what do you want the college admission officer to learn about you from this teacher's letter? Your strengths/passions? Areas in which you would like to grow? Show with specific details and examples! Don't simply tell. <input type="text"/></p> <p>What two (positive) adjectives could this teacher use to describe you? Give a concrete example for each of these qualities to illustrate how you display them. <input type="text"/></p> <p>Describe a project, paper, presentation or activity from this class in which you enjoyed or were especially proud: <input type="text"/></p>		List the previous courses you have taken in this department and the semester average grades you earned:		(List course and grades)	(List course and grades)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
List the previous courses you have taken in this department and the semester average grades you earned:							
(List course and grades)	(List course and grades)						
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>						
<p>Was your academic success or grades in this class affected by any personal or family obstacles (change of schools, family issues, illness, etc.)? If you have not done particularly well, are there any pertinent reasons to explain why? <input type="text"/></p> <p>During secondary school, what out-of-class experiences have you had that are related to this subject area? Have you been involved with summer courses, reading, activities, things you did but weren't required to do for the class, or a club related to this course? Are you involved with any extracurricular clubs associated with this subject? Please explain. <input type="text"/></p> <p>Remind this teacher of any interactions you have had with him or her outside of the classroom. These could be through activities, clubs, etc. Describe any memorable conversations, humorous experiences, or other connections you have had with this teacher? <input type="text"/></p> <p>Is there anything else that will help this teacher write an effective recommendation about you? <input type="text"/></p>							

Transcripts

You will need to send your transcripts to some universities. When you apply they will ask you to submit a transcript. This is sent by guidance counsellor. Please fill in the transcript request form, you need to put where the transcript is going and by when.

Transcripts will only be given to you or the required universities. We do not work with agents. Please do not ask us to supply your information to a third party.

**School of the Nations
Transcript Request Form**

A candidate may ask for a Transcript to be sent to a university mid-year as required by the certain countries. Transcripts are usually sent directly to the institution or via [LipLipBox](#). A candidate can choose up to Six institutions for submission. For posted transcripts the candidate will incur the charge.

Many universities will allow you to self-report your grades, from your Report cards and predicted grades. If you are required to have the transcript for university application only, please fill in the form and give to ISD Fizza.

Final International Baccalaureate results will be issued directly to your postsecondary institution(s) in electronic or paper format (a transcript) in July (May Session) or January (November Session). **NOTE:** Any requests made after 16 June will likely be delayed in processing due to summer break. Please note there is a charge of MOP 50 for any additional Forms 1-4 or Forms 5-6 transcript requests made. If you have particular contact information for who should receive an official .pdf of your results, include it in the space provided.

Fill out the form below for your request(s). Include any applicant ID information, if needed.

Date Submitted:	Student name:			
	What application you are making and if it needs to be given to you explain	Institution and Delivery Information (Email/Post)	Country/Region	Deadline date for university
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
Student Signature	Josia	Parent Signature	Choi Min Min	

GUIDANCE OFFICE USE ONLY:
Date Received: _____ Date Transcript(s) Submitted: _____

Predicted grades

Your transcripts will have your predicted grades on it. If you wish to see your transcript or you are required to send the transcript yourself you need to sign this letter. Ask the Guidance Counsellor for the release of the predicted IB grades letter. The letter needs to be signed by your parents and will be release to you.

You CAN NOT negotiate your grades with your subject teachers. This is unfair to your teachers.

The predicted grades are released twice a year once in Dec and late Jan early February.

When predicted grades are given out this is an indicator of what level you are working at. If they are not what you expected, there is time for you to change them. Speaking with your teacher to find out areas for development will help you plan your studies. Speak to the guidance counsellor to help with this.

Ref. No. SNC/WL/170102
2018/19 School Year

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This letter is to inform you of the school policy regarding the release of Form 6 students' predicted grades in IB subjects. This is due to an increasing number of universities requesting students to input their IB predicted grades during the process of the online applications.

The purpose of predicted grades is to provide Universities with an indication of the current performance level of a student in the programme. The school has refrained, in the past from making these available to students as we want to ensure that students do not take these grades as an indication to become overconfident or feel unable to succeed rather to complete the course with their full effort. Universities will withdraw offers if a student does not meet their minimum requirements in the actual result.

IB subject teachers decide on the predicted grades in November and March of the Form 6 year based on three documents related to the students' academic results, and these documents can be made available to you. These documents are:

- The official IB Diploma Programme examination report of previous years
- The SON student report cards in Form 5 and Form 6
- The official document of IB Diploma Programme subject grade descriptors

The teachers have also been advised to be moderately positive in their prediction if a definite grade is not seen. For instance, a teacher will award the student a predicted grade of 2 if he/she has reasons to support both a 4 and a 3 to be awarded. Since the content and skills assessed in the different academic terms are different parts of the syllabus of the subjects, the IB predicted grades are not directly reflected by the students' SON report card grades.

The school has decided that predicted grades could be released to students and their parents/guardians for the purpose of university application. However, the following consent form must be completed and signed, and it must be understood that the IB predicted grades are strictly non-negotiable.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions and concerns regarding this policy and any other matters related to your child's progress in school.

Best regards,

William Leong
IB Diploma Programme Coordinator
Secondary Administrator

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CONSENT FORM 同意書 - Release of IB Predicted Grades 提供 IB 预估分数

I, _____, being the parent / guardian of Form 6 student _____, request for the release of the IB predicted grades from the School of the Nations. I understand that this predicted grades should be used for university application only and they are strictly non-negotiable.

本人 _____ 是 Form 6 学生 _____ 的家长 / 监护人，请求学校提供 IB 的预估分数。本人明白此预估分数是为申请入读大学用的，而且是不可协商的。

Parent signature: 家长签名: _____

Date 日期: _____

Australia

Eight of the top 100 universities in the world are in Australia and offer more than 22000 courses across in 1100 institutions. The Australian Government invests around \$200,000,000 ASD in international scholarships.

How to apply

Australia a number of intake cycles of the academic year. July, Sept, February. February is the main entry point for undergraduate students. You will apply direct to the university and will be charged an application fee each university has different fee but it is around **\$100 ASD**. Most students apply for the February intake. You can apply as late as December. You will have an advantage as you will know your IB results as you will have received them in July. This means you will be able to apply to courses where you meet the entry requirements. If you apply for the July intake you will need to apply in April, if this is your only option be careful because if you do not get the grades you could be without a place and have spent a lot of money. You can apply for a pre-uni course where you do not need an IB score.

If you are an Australian national you will be required to have higher grades compared to international students. If you are not an Australian national you can get an agent to help with the visa process and how to navigate the process. Please contact the university you want to apply to and they will tell you which agents they work with. You need to use one that your chosen university accepts. The school does not work with agents we will only pass documents to you and your parents or direct to universities that you have instructed us to send information to.

English language requirements

TOEFL, IELTS and Pearson Test of English (academic tests) or Cambridge English, Advanced/Certificate in Advanced English (CAE) are accepted as proficiency, check the university and course for the score required. The tests need to satisfy the requirements and have been done within 24 months of the proposed start date of your degree.

Visa

All international students will need to apply for the **Student Visa (Subclass 500)**, and you will need to meet the Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) requirement. You may be required to attend an interview at your nearest Australian embassy for this, as part of the application. You must apply for your Australian student visa online. On the Australian Home Affairs website there is a check list of documents have them translated into English. Once you have done this you will set up an account on 'ImmiAccount' the application system to submit your documents and submit your application.

An acceptance to a course that is registered with the Commonwealth Register of Institutions of Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS), is required for the visa along with an online code and confirmation of enrolment or an offer letter.

You will need to prove your finances that you are able to cover your course fees, travel expenses and living costs. This is usually about **\$20,290 A\$D** per year this does not include tuition fees. As part of the application process they will want you to pay Accommodation fees to your institution in advance.

A medical check-up may be asked for to show you are in good health, but shouldn't be done unless specifically advised to and needs to be with a doctor that is approved by the Australian immigration department.

Proof of English proficiency is required for those who are not from an Anglophone country or who have not completed at least five years of study in one. If you joined SON after F2 you will probably need to do a test. Proficiency with a certified English language test results with a score depending on your course level. You might need to do a different test that is required by the university.

You need to pay a fee to apply, and can get an estimate of this on the Border.gov.au website. Most applications take four weeks to process. The price is from **\$575 AUD**.

Canada

There are 96 universities in Canada this is a smaller number than the USA or UK considering how big the country is, but has a number of high ranking universities in the world. Universities in Canada operate under the provincial government giving a level of quality assurance, there are 10 Canadian provinces, with 3 territories to the north. Canada is has bilingual status, with English and French meaning that the government and official documents can use both, when you are looking at universities check the common language used in that province.

Degrees in Canada require three or four years of full-time study, this depends on the province and if the program is general degree or specialized. An honours baccalaureate (Same as a bachelor's, different terminally) degree usually signals a higher degree of concentration in the honours subject, as well as a higher level of academic achievement and may require an additional year of study.

General degree - you can elect a variety of major and minors as well as optional courses, to create a diversified degree based on your interests

Specialized - provide a more focused education in one area of study. Provides the background to help you proceed to a higher degree or giving you a qualifications to practice in a chosen field.

Applying to universities in Canada is straight forward you need to contact the universities directly. They usually ask for the transcript to be sent. Some may require an essay or a statement of intent to support this but they will tell you what they want.

How to apply

Applying to Universities in Ontario there is a centralised system **OUAC** (Ontario Universities' Application Centre). You make an application and choose the universities you wish this application to be sent to.

Canadian universities will give you an offer on your IB score and there is no national entrance exam it is up to each university. You will need to send your final results to the universities and the results are below the required score **the offer will be rescinded**.

English language requirements

Canadian universities accept a range of tests or qualifications to demonstrate your English language ability. Check with the university. Some accept will your iGCSE or IBDP or you can take TOFEL to show you are proficient in English.

Visa

If you do not have a Canadian passport you will need to get a student visa and this is called a Canadian study permit. The study permit is not a visa. It alone doesn't allow you to enter Canada. You may also need a temporary resident visa or an electronic travel authorization (**eTA**). They will issue it as part of your study permit application. **You need apply before you travel to Canada**

You can apply online or through a paper application, which can be obtained from the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website. The visa office in Hong Kong will provide specific instructions about which documents you need to provide; this can vary depending on your nationality. For Quebec you must also apply for a certificate of acceptance, known as a CAQ, from the government of Quebec.

- Proof of income will be required this is to show that you can support yourself while you are studying.
- Some applicants may need to attend an interview.
- A letter standardized letter of acceptance from a recognised higher education provider will be needed.
- Study permit: **\$150 CAD**

Hong Kong

Our neighbour, Hong Kong has 20 degree-awarding higher education institutions, and 10% are ranked in the world top 20 and 3 in the top 10 in Asia. Hong Kong universities are very competitive to get into. 8 of the universities are publicly funded and use English for the majority of courses. Hong Kong universities are known for being world-leaders in technical and engineering subjects. The academic year in Hong Kong is two semesters, Semester one from early September to late December, and the second from mid-January to May.

Degrees in Hong Kong tend to follow the UK style of degree, however most take 4 years. If you do well in your IB they will offer you advanced standing this means you will start in your 2nd year. You will complete your studies in general fields of study and will choose a major to specialise in. Universities are divided into a number of faculties by subject area, each with a set of general and more specific Bachelors programmes. You are able to choose a minor to complement your major. Some institutions also offer students to complete double degree

How to apply

Application deadlines are different for each university but the application period is from December and May, for courses starting the following September. However you can apply after May as a late applicant, however this is risky considering how competitive it is. When you apply you can choose up to 3 degrees that you want to study. When you are given an offer you will be given conditions that you will need to meet to actually take up the course. You will need to be given a deadline to make the decision and pay a deposit, this is non-refundable unless you don't meet the conditions.

If you have a Hong Kong ID you can apply as a domestic student and apply through your **JUPUS** this is the Hong Kong University application system. If you are international you will apply direct to the school you want to go to.

English language requirements

The IB is widely accepted if you are not a native English speaker you may be required to take the IELTS or TOEFL.

Visa

When you have the offer the university will arrange local sponsor for your visa application. You will need to submit a visa application form and provide proof of identity, evidence of your academic qualifications and your parent's financial information. The immigration department will want you to provide information about where you are going to live, this can be done via the university or if you are living with a family member you will need to provide this. You will need to renew your visa annually at least four weeks before the expiry date.

Documents to be submitted by the applicant:

- Application for Entry for Study in Hong Kong (ID995A)
- Your recent photograph (affixed on page 2 of the application form ID 995A)
- Photocopy of your valid travel document
- Photocopy of your Hong Kong identity card (if any)
- A letter of acceptance from the education institution

- One of your parents should authorize the sponsor or his/her relative/friend in the HKSAR to be your guardian. A consent letter duly signed by both the guardian and one of your parents should be produced (if you are under the age of 18)
- Photocopy of proof of your accommodation arrangement (if you are under the age of 18)
- Photocopy of proof of your financial support, e.g. bank statements, savings account passbooks, tax receipts and salary slips (if the sponsor is the education institution)

Macau

Home, as you know there are a number of universities in Macau. Yet to be recognised in the world rankings however most of the curricula, teachers and the general quality of teaching have reached an internationally accepted level. Mainly taught in English and Chinese but there are some courses that are taught in Portuguese.

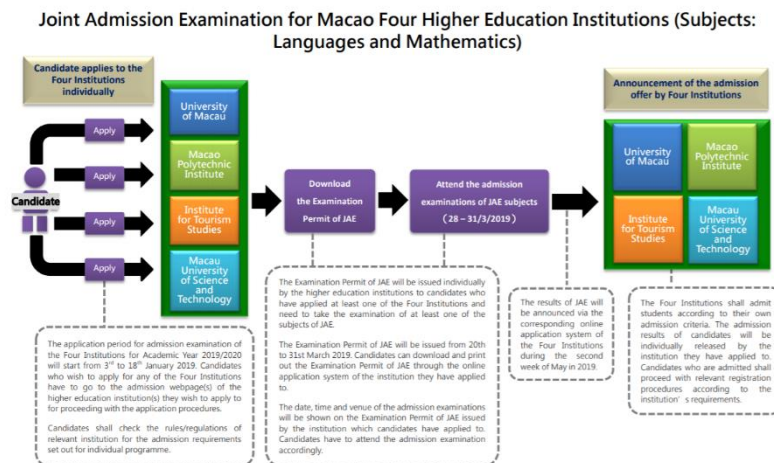
Macau universities offer some subjects that you can study elsewhere, this is a good option for those who want to stay at home. The degrees are a four year program and often there are option for an exchange or to study in a different country. Macau universities also offer post graduate study. Each one is unique and offers something different. The cost can be considerably cheaper if you are local. The DSEJ offer scholarships to

How to apply

You can apply to each university directly. You will need your IB diploma and to school graduation certificate. If you are in the top of your class you can get the Director's recommendation, you will have an interview and be admitted with taking the entrance exam.

Joint Admission Examination (JAE) is one application to four Higher Education Institutions in Macao, there is no benchmark for pass or fail. The result are only used for the admission of the Four Institutions. Candidates fill in the choice of programmes as current practice. When filling in the application form, please pay attention on the course requirements of the Four Institutions as each vary. There is more information on the DSEJ.

If you want the Directors recommendation you need to speak to the guidance counsellor and Mr Leong and an interview with Mr Nair will be arranged. You need to think why the Director should recommended you as you will be representing SON.



UK

The United Kingdom is made up of four countries, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. If you want to a university in Ireland this is a different county and process. There are 130 universities with around 65,000 course to choose from. Degrees tend to be specialised in a subject area. However, there are courses that allow some flexibility in what you study. There are many old and established universities in the UK and have some rank with the world top 10 in the world. The majority of university on the UK are public there are now a few private universities they tend to be specialised, smaller and cost more.

Undergraduate degrees in the UK are bachelor's degrees and honours degrees, if a student gets a pass grade or below the honours standard, you will achieve and "ordinary degree" or a "pass degree" and will not be given the honours. Lectures are the main style of teaching with only occasional assignments. You may not get any no actual assignments and your entire grade will come from your one final exams held at the end of each year. Each year's final exam is given a percentage toward to final grade.

The most common **Bachelor's degree** are Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BSc). Other degree schools include Bachelor of Education (BEd), Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) and Bachelor of Laws (LLB). You will find that you can do a BA or BSc in the same subject it is important to do your research in to the course as the way it will be taught will be different. A BA will have a humanities focus and a BSc will be scientific. The UK offers a **Foundation degree** to help students who do not meet the entry requirements for a Bachelors to develop their skills and knowledge.

Single: study one subject.

Joint honours degree: divide your time 50:50 between two subjects.

Major/minor: study two subjects, normally at a 75:25 ratio.

Combined honours programme: study between two to four subjects, specialising in just two subjects in years two and three.

Modular courses: build a personalised course by choosing modules you're interested in.

Sandwich courses: courses with one year in industry or a year abroad.

How to apply

Applying to a UK university you need to apply through **UCAS** (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). All university courses are on UCAS. This is the only way to apply to public universities in the UK. Private universities do use UCAS but you can apply direct.

They except you IB score and you see on UCAS what score you are required to have for entry. You may also notice that there are UCAS tariff points. Some universities use this. UCAS tariff point covers converts all qualifications to a tariff point this help universities look at one point system and can work out what level you are at.

UCAS Tariff point

Grade	Points HL	Point SL	Grade	EE	TOK
H7	56	28	A	12	12
H6	48	24	B	10	10
H5	32	16	C	8	8
H4	24	12	D	6	6
H3	12	6	E	4	4
H2	0	0			
H1	0	0			

UCAS Process

- Registration opens in May
- You will get a UCAS username and ID number you must save both
- You can submit your application form from the 1st September
- Only 5 choices of course or university, it can be made up how you want
- One personal statement for 5 Choices
- Pay 250 MOP to UCAS
- The same applications goes to all 5.
- One reference form a teacher that you do not see
- Oxbridge Veterinary Medicine deadline Oct 15th
- Standard deadline January 15th

Additional exams to take

If you are applying to **Oxbridge** there will definitely be an entrance exam and interview and you may be required to travel to the college you have applied to.

If you are apply for **Medicine** or **Veterinary Medicine** you will be required to the **UKCAT** or **BMAT**.

The University Clinical Aptitude Test (**UKCAT**) is an admissions test used by many medical schools to assess students' suitability to study medicine or dentistry

- Two-hour computerised exam designed to test aptitude rather than knowledge.
- Consists of five sections, each designed to assess different skills. Looking at problem-solving, communication, numerical skills, spatial awareness, and integrity, empathy and teamwork skills.
 1. Verbal Reasoning
 2. Quantitative Reasoning
 3. Abstract Reasoning
 4. Decision Making
 5. Situational Judgement

The BioMedical Admissions Test (**BMAT**) is an aptitude test used as part of the admissions process for Medicine, Biomedical Sciences and Dentistry. 2-hour, pen-and-paper test with three sections.

1. Multiple choice Aptitude and Skills
2. Multiple choice Scientific Knowledge and Applications
3. Writing Task how you develop and organise ideas, and to communicate them in writing,

The Law National Aptitude Test (**LNAT**) used by universities to select people for their law courses. The test does not test your knowledge of law it helps to assess your aptitude for the skills required to study law. It is a two-part test: multiple choice questions based on passages of text, and an essay.

English Language

ILETS the International English Language Testing System, standardised test of English language proficiency for non-native English language speakers. There is not pass score universities will ask for a score that fits their entry requirements Reading, writing, Speaking and listening

Visa

- You will need to apply for Tier 4 (General) student visa to study in the UK.
- You must have an offer of a place on university on a course
- Prove you can speak, read, write and understand English
- Have enough money to support yourself and pay for your course - the amount will vary depending on your circumstances
- If you are from a country that's not in the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland there maybe
- Other eligibility requirements depending on your nationality.
- The earliest you can apply for a visa is 3 months before you start your course.
- A decision on your visa within 3 week
- It costs £348 to apply for this visa from outside the UK.
- You'll also have to pay the healthcare surcharge as part of your application.
- If you are an EU Citizen and you arrive in the UK before 1 January 2021, you will not need a visa. If you plan to stay in the UK longer than 1 January 2021 (for example, to complete your full course), you'll need to apply online for the **EU Settlement Scheme**. The scheme is free of charge. You should apply as soon as possible **after** you've arrived in the UK, and by 30 June 2021.

USA

There are more than 4,000 colleges and universities according to the US Department of Education. This is a great deal more than any other country listed in this handbook. This gives you a vast number of where you can choose to study your degree. There are many you will have heard of, including the Ivy League and the University of California, there are many others that are just as good. UniFrog will help you to find suitable choices. In the USA universities can either be state university or private. Private tend to be more expensive.

In the US degrees are four years, in your first year of your degree you take courses from a variety of academic areas and declare a major at the end of the first year or in the second. American universities have different “schools,” or departments, such as the School of Arts and Sciences. When you declare your major you will take classes outside of that field, known as “electives.” gaining range of knowledge from a variety of different subjects. You will be get a boarder degree of knowledge. Assessments take the form of courses weekly or even bi-weekly readings as well as other assignments such as small writing projects, major research papers, and oral presentations throughout plus exams.

A **Bachelor degree** is what most of you will be applying for and is a four- or five-year college program. Most students earn a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or Bachelor of Science degree (B.S.). Other types of bachelor’s degrees include the Bachelor of Fine Arts or Bachelor of Architecture degree.

Joint degree is when students can earn a bachelor's plus a graduate or professional degree in less time if they combine them. A student on this track may apply to a graduate program as an undergraduate and begin the graduate program in the fourth year of college.

Liberal Arts also known as a 3-2 or dual-degree program students usually complete three years of liberal arts study followed by two years of professional or technical study. In the end, students earn two bachelor’s degrees, usually a B.A. and a B.S.

Associate degree are a two-year degree and is an Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.). Students can transfer to a four-year program to earn a bachelor’s degree. Others complete associate degrees to prepare to go straight to work.

How to apply

There is no limit to the number of universities you can apply to. **Common app**, the majority of universities use this application platform, or if you are apply to the universities direct. School that are part of the University of California you will need to use the **UC application platform**. Some states have application systems that students can or must use in order to apply to schools. There is a fee to apply to university. The universities set these themselves and you pay via the application platform. The fee is between \$25 USD to \$75 USD.

Application deadline can vary but there are different intake for applications.

Most applications **open 1st Aug** including Common App

Early decisions is for your top-choice university and the deadlines is early to mid-November

Early admissions decisions are released in December. University may have not made a decision on your application and put you in the regular round of applications.

For **Regular application** the deadlines is between January and March

You will be getting offer from January to April and you must make a decision by **1st May** and pay a deposit. This can be in the range of

To apply to the US you will need

- SAT or ACT score
- Some universities are starting to accept IB
- Transcripts to be submitted on Common App or direct to the university.
- Recommendation letter
- Essay questions answered are on Common App, UC application. There are 4 essay questions to answer. And the HE workbook and UniFrog can help you answers these.
- TOEFL results

Tests

A test-optional college let students decide whether they want to submit test scores with their application. Most test-optional schools will consider SAT and ACT scores if they are submitted, but focus on other factors they believe are stronger predictors of a student's potential to succeed in college. These schools look at a student's essays, recommendations, grades, and coursework just as (or more) closely than your test scores.

A test-flexible college let students submit other test scores in place of the SAT or ACT, such as one or more SAT Subject Tests, an International Baccalaureate exam, or Advanced Placement test.

Test blind: they don't factor test scores into admissions decisions even if students submit scores

English Language requirement

The TOEFL test measures your ability to use and understand English at the university level. It evaluates how well you combine your reading, listening, speaking and writing skills to perform academic tasks. The TOEFL test is scored on a scale of 0 to 120 points. Each section is scored out of 30 . You need to take the exam before you start degree, ideal time it 10 months before you start your course.

Visa

Once the university has determined that your application is complete and you are academically eligible, they will issue an **I-20** form to enable you to apply for your student visa. Then you can apply for the **F-1 visa** that means you can study in the USA. You can apply for the student visas at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate with jurisdiction over their place of permanent residence this will be in Hong Kong.

You will need to show your university that you have enough money to support yourself while studying without having to work and you may have to show health insurance in order to cover any medical expenses should you need any medical assistance.

The process may vary or require additional steps, depending on your country and embassy or consulate, you will need the following when applying for your student visa:

Items to Provide With Your Application

- You will have to pay a non-refundable application fee.
- All applicants will need to complete and submit DS-160, the online application for a non-immigrant visa.
- Valid Passport - A passport valid for travel to the United States and with a validity date at least six months beyond your intended period of stay in the United States.
- Passport Photos

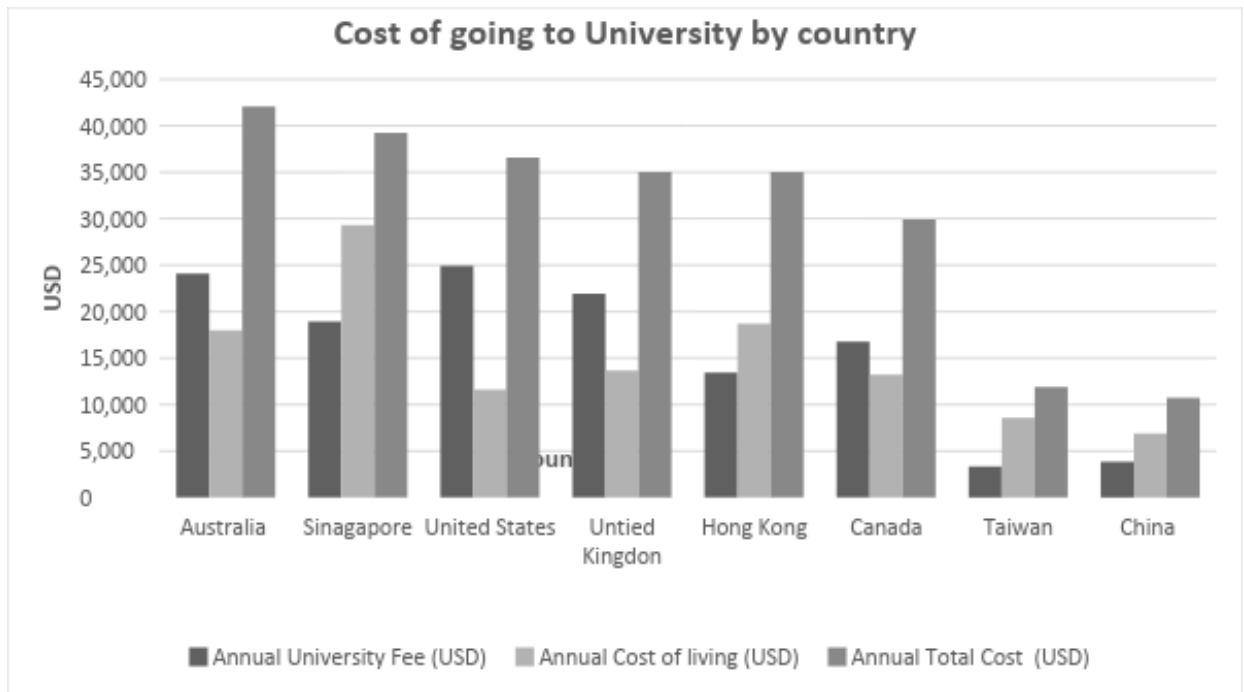
Examples of F1 Visa Interview Questions

1. Why did you choose to study in the US instead of joining the workforce in your home country?
2. Why did you choose this school and why is it the best school for you?
3. What are your test scores (SAT, TOEFL, IELTS), your GPA, and your overall performance as a student in the past?
4. How are you funding the entire duration of your education, including tuition, room and board, transportation, and all other expenses?
5. After you graduate, will you return home or will you stay in the United States?

The Cost

The cost of going to university varies depending on what country you go to and if you are a national of a particular country it may be cheaper for you to study there. However each country is different and some universities offer scholarship and this can help with the cost.

If you are UK national but have not lived in the UK for the past three years you are not entitled to domestic fees.



Source: "international education", adapted from HSBC 2014

Timeline

It is never too early to start thinking about university. This is the time to explore, research and try out your interests. Thinking about what you enjoy at school and your favourite subjects are an indicators of what you might want to study at university. Each academic year doing range of different activities like after school clubs, groups are a member of outside of school will help you to narrow down what it is you want to do at University. Having an open discussion with your family about your future is important and can help to explore different avenues for your future. You are not expected to do this alone the guidance counsellor is here to help.

Form 3

- Work hard on your marks. The bringing of your IGCSE and your Form 3 grades and this will be put on your transcripts.
- Exploring what you like to do. This is your extracurricular activities like community service, leadership activities, sport, and the arts are all positive for your university applications.
- Do a career quiz. This is to help you explore careers ideas and what you might want to study at university and to help you explore who you are
- See the guidance counsellor. This can help to think about your future options

Form 4

- Begin researching university options. Talks at school from universities will give you an insight to what is available and you can start to explore different countries.
- Introduction to UniFrog. Start exploring what is university different careers, universities and subjects that you can study at universities.
- Next Step after IGCSE. Where do you want to go and what do you want to study. Is IB right for you, should you consider another option like A-level
- IB Induction
- Do the IB handbook about your option choices
- IB induction University visit
- Try your SATs.
- University summer school
- Visit Universities
- Meet with the guidance counsellor

Form 5

Term 1

- Start the HE workbook
- Attend TIS University fair.
- Take the SAT, if you are going to the US. It is usually September or October.
- Meet the guidance counsellor to discuss IB choices and talk about any possible change
- Use your winter holiday to do significant research about university options.
- If you are traveling for winter holiday, incorporate campus visits to places you may not otherwise visit.
- Sign up to UniFrog and start compiling your list
- Let the guidance team know about intentions to apply for Medicine/Vet/Oxbridge/IVy League

Term 2

- Parent Night for Form 5
- HE work book
- Attend university talks and visits

- Personal statement workshops
- CV/Resume' writing workshops
- Have a preliminary list of universities
- Take the March SAT.

Term 3

- UniFrog
- Summer exams good indicator of your IB score time to reflect and make a plan of improvement
- HE workbook
- Sign up for summer school
- Work experience to help application
- Take SAT/ACT and TOFEL/IELTs
- Start university essays and personal statement attend workshop
- Visit universities
- Arrange BMAT, UKCAT or LNET and take

Form 6 – You need to make regular appointments with the guidance counsellor

Term 1

- **KNOW YOUR DEADLINES**
- HE Hand book Finished
- Final drafts of essays done and checked
- Hand in list or where you are going to apply
- Nov 30th recommendation letter form handed in or Sept 30th for Oxbridge
- Early Decisions applications need to be in
- Keep attending university talks
- Request for transcripts form given in
- Oxford, Cambridge, or medical/dental/veterinary programs in the UK Oct 15th
- Take TOEFL/IELTS
- Take SAT/ACT
- Attend TIS HE Fair

Term 2

- Mock exams
- January deadlines
- Rolling admission begins
- Second round of predicted grades
- Make decisions on offer
- University interviews

Term 3

- Reply to offer May 1st for the UK and US
- Make sure you have any documentation required for your student visas identified and submitted, if appropriate.
- IB exams, finalize your university selection, and get ready for your transition away from SON.
- Meet with the guidance counsellor to discuss expectations about going to university.
- **GRADUATE**
- **July 5th Results and speak with the Guidance Counsellor for support if you need it**

Glossary

A

Academic advising- support program where universities match students with advisors for course selection and academic programme considerations.

Adjustment- UCAS process where your final IB results exceed your predicted ones, so you may include an application to a more prestigious university before deciding.

Agent- outside person employed by families to support university admission process.

Associate's degrees- two-year degrees in the US.

B

BMAT - BioMedical Admissions Test

C

Common Application (Common App) - the centralised application for the US with over 500 universities accepting it.

Community colleges- two-year colleges in the US. After completing the Associate's degree, students can transfer to Bachelor degree programmes.

Clearing- if your conditional offers from UCAS are higher than your actual IB results, you may apply to other options that match your results.

Clery Act- law in the US that requires universities to publicize crime statistics for every campus.

Comprehensive universities- mid-sized universities in US that offer many programmes of study.

Counsellor recommendation- is a reference by the guidance counsellor that speaks to who you are as a person. Contextual questions such as class rank, grading scale, and General SON information is also included.

D

Demonstrated interest- ways that applicants have shown their desire to attend a particular campus. Can include visiting campus, university expos, phone conversations with admissions, etc. Some universities, particularly highly selective ones, use this as part of the review process.

E

Early Action- application type in the US that is non-binding. Students apply for an earlier application deadline with an agreement to hear responses from universities earlier than Regular Decision applicants. Can also be a deadline for scholarship consideration?

Early Decision- application type in the US that is binding. Students apply to one university and if they are admitted, they must enrol.

Extra-if you are not offered any spots with your initial list with UCAS, you may add one programme at a time to be considered for admission.

F

Fit schools- universities where your academic profile matches the institutions', making admission probable.

Foundation course- up to an extra year of course work for UK universities. Is offered as a bridge between secondary school and the full academic programme at a particular university.

Full-pay student- is a student who does not qualify for financial aid. Most international students are considered to be full-pay.

G

Graduate programmes- refers to upper level degrees (Masters, PhD, Law or Medical degrees).

I

International student services- infrastructure at respective universities to help international students with issues and transition to campus. Can include visa, insurance, housing, and other services.

Ivy League- refers to group of elite universities in the US that includes Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and others.

L

Liberal arts- a comprehensive curriculum that gives students a breadth of study.

Likely schools- universities where your academic profile meets or exceeds general admission standards, making admission likely.

LNAT- The Law National Aptitude Test

N

Non-JUPAS- In Hong Kong, JUPAS refers to local applicants and non-JUPAS refers to international students.

O

Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAC) - centralized application system for universities in Ontario, Canada.

Oxbridge- refers to Oxford and Cambridge Universities in the UK.

P

Personal statement- also known as admissions essay. Your narrative aspect of an application for admission.

Predicted IB results- UK (and others) universities will want your teachers to predict what your final IB results will be. This allows them to make conditional offers based on what your teachers believe you will end up getting.

R

Reach schools- universities where your academic profile makes admission possible, but unlikely.

Regular Decision- Normal deadline for university applications.

Research universities- large universities in the US with major research initiatives. Typically also have law and medical schools.

Rolling Admissions- process where universities make determinations about admission as materials are submitted. No fixed deadline.

Russell Group- slang that refers to group of 24 prestigious UK universities, including Oxford and Cambridge.

S

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) - one of two main university admissions exams in the US.

School Profile- document that outlines the history and mission of SON. It also includes grading scale, information about curriculum, and other universities that SON graduates consider. This gives universities a lot of good information to put SON in context of other schools.

SAT IIs- subject-based exams. Typically, universities will require two of these for admission in place of the SAT.

Specialty schools- colleges that focus on particular industries (e.g. Hospitality, Business, and Art/Design)

T

Teacher recommendation- reference from an SON faculty member that speaks to your ability as a student. This shows universities your academic self in another way beyond transcripts.

Test-optional policy- US universities do not require an SAT or ACT for admission. www.fairtest.org can be used to find such institutions.

TOEFL/IELTS- English-proficiency exams. Both are used widely. However, TOEFL tends to be used by US and IELTS by the UK.

Transferring- process by which students change universities or academic programme.

U

UKCAT -

Undergraduate programmes- refers to bachelor and associate degree programmes.

Universities and Colleges Application System (UCAS)- the centralized university application system for the UK.

US News and World Report Rankings- one of the most popular university ranking systems across the world.

Useful website

Application websites

UK - <https://www.ucas.com>

USA - <http://www.commonapp.org>

HK - <https://www.jupas.edu.hk/en/>

Research

UK - <https://icould.com/>

USA - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>

UK - https://www.careerfitter.com/free_test/careerbuilder

UK - <https://www.ukcoursefinder.com/>

CA - <https://www.edutopia.org/multiple-intelligences-assessmen>

CA - <http://www.literacynet.org/mi/assessment/findyourstrengths.html>

UK - <https://university.which.co.uk/>

International - <https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings>

UK - <https://unistats.ac.uk/>

UK - <https://opendays.com>

International - <https://80000hours.org/>

CA - <https://www.univcan.ca/>

CA - <http://careerwise.minnstate.edu/>

CA <https://www.onetonline.org/>

Admission tests

USA SAT - <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register>

USA ACT - <https://www.act.org/>

UK BMAT - <http://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat/>

UK UKCAT - <https://www.ukcat.ac.uk/>

UK IELTS - <https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/locations/Macau>

USA TOEFL - <https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/register>

Student Visa

USA - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html>

UK - <https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa>

HK - <https://www.immd.gov.hk/eng/services/visas/study.html>

CA - <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/student.asp>

AUS - <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/visa-1/500->

SG - https://www.mfa.gov.sg/content/mfa/overseasmission/beijing/student_pass.html